

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 AID-05
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L-03 SS-15 NSC-05 HA-05 PA-01 HEW-04 /128 W
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P 191720Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5012

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 22775

NESCO

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: AORG, UNESCO
SUBJECT: UNESCO: 20TH GENERAL CONFERENCE: CANDI-
DATES FOR THE PRESIDENCY

1. PRESIDENCY OF UNESCO GENERAL CONFERENCE IS SUBJECT
TO INFORMAL AGREEMENT ON ROTATION BY ELECTORAL GROUP.
UNITED STATES, WITH CANADA, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND,
AND WES, BELONGS TO ELECTORAL GROUP ONE, WHICH HAS
NOT HAD THE GENERAL CONFERENCE PRESIDENCY SINCE 1958,
ALTHOUGH FROM THAT DATE BACKWARDS, IT HAD IT FIVE
TIMES.

2. CANADIANS HAVE BEEN PRESSING THE CANDIDACY OF
NAPOLEON LE BLANC FOR A NUMBER OF MONTHS. LE BLANC
INSPIRES MIXED REACTIONS, BUT NO WILD ENTHUSIASM. AT
A MEETING OF ELECTORAL GROUP ONE IN JUNE, CHAIRMAN
WESTERHOF (AUSTRIA) SAID HE HAD HEARD RUMORS THAT THE
ARAB MEMBER STATES WERE GOING TO MAKE A TRY FOR THE
PRESIDENCY, WHICH GROUP ONE THOUGHT IT WAS ENTITLED TO
THIS TIME, AFTER NOT HAVING HAD IT FOR 20 YEARS. IF
GROUP ONE WANTED TO SECURE THE POSITION, WESTERHOF SAID,
IT WOULD HAVE TO MOVE AHEAD TO ANNOUNCE FORMALLY ITS
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CANDIDATE; OTHERWISE THE ARAB STATES WOULD ANNOUNCE A
CANDIDATE AND TAKE THE INITIATIVE. ALTHOUGH EVERYONE
KNEW IN ADVANCE THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING, THERE WAS
UNANIMOUS SILENCE WHEN WESTERHOF ASKED IF ANY OTHER
MEMBER OF GROUP ONE WISHED TO PROPOSE A CANDIDATE.
HUMMEL (SWITZERLAND) WAS PRESENT AND PINTASILGO
(PORTUGAL) WAS REPRESENTED BY HER DEPUTY, LOBO.

3. WESTERHOF SENT OUT A CIRCULAR NOTE ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP ANNOUNCING THAT IT WAS PUTTING FORTH THE NAME OF LE BLANC, FOR PRESIDENCY OF THE 20TH GENCONF. SUBSEQUENTLY, RUMORS BEGAN COMING BACK THAT HUMMEL AND PINTASILGO WERE SAYING IN THE CORRIDORS THAT LE BLANC DIDN'T REALLY HAVE SOLID GROUP ONE SUPPORT, AND INDICATING THAT HIS CANDIDACY WAS NOT SET IN CONCRETE. WE HEAR THAT PINTASILGO, HERSELF, WANTED THE POSITION, BUT COULD NOT GET HER GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT, AT LEAST AT THAT TIME. WE ALSO HEAR THAT HUMMEL, AS PART OF HIS EFFORTS TO CONVINCE BERN OF HIS INDISPENSABILITY AS SWISS PERMREP TO UNESCO, WANTS TO BE CHAIRMAN OF THE 20TH GENCONF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE. (HE IS CURRENTLY CHAIRMAN OF THE EXBD F&A COMMITTEE.) SHOULD THERE BE A CONFERENCE PRESIDENT FROM GROUP ONE, HE IS SAID TO FEEL THAT IT WOULD DIMINISH HIS CHANCES OF GETTING A MAJOR COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIP BECAUSE GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION WOULD WORK AGAINST HAVING GROUP ONE PEOPLE IN TWO SUCH IMPORTANT POSITIONS.

4. IN ANY EVENT, THESE INDICATIONS OF DISARRAY IN GROUP ONE STIMULATED THE JORDANIANS TO MOVE AHEAD. ON JULY 17, PERMDEL RECEIVED A COPY OF A JORDANIAN CIRCULAR NOTE NOTIFYING THE CANDIDACY FOR 20TH GENCONF
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PRESIDENCY OF DR. ABDEL SALAM MAJALI, CURRENTLY JORDANIAN MINISTER OF EDUCATION. IN THIS INSTANCE, JORDANIANS ARE ATTEMPTING TO MAKE THE CASE THAT, EVEN THOUGH ARAB AND AFRICAN STATES JOINTLY FORM ELECTORAL GROUP FIVE, THE ARAB STATES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS HAVING THEIR OWN ENTITLEMENT TO THE PRESIDENCY. THEY CITE THAT ONLY ONCE (TURKEY, 14TH SESSION) HAS AN ARAB HAD THE POST. SUDANESE PERMREP TOLD EMBOFF THAT ARAB STATES WERE LUKEWARM ABOUT JORDANIAN ACTION, BUT COULD NOT WITHHOLD NOMINAL SUPPORT ONCE JORDAN HAD GONE PUBLIC.

5. THE U.S. HAS A LOT TURNING ON THE 20TH GENCONF. IF WE ARE TO CONSOLIDATE THE GAINS OF NAIROBI, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE 20TH GENCONF PRESIDENT UNDERSTAND AND BE SYMPATHETIC TO OUR POSITIONS ON MIDDLE EAST ISSUES, MASS MEDIA, AND THE DECLARATION ON RACE AND RACIAL PREJUDICE. WE ARE GOING TO HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME AT BEST, AND AT WORST COULD GET THE ADOPTION OF

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 22775

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RESOLUTIONS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF ISRAEL ON EDUCATIONAL
AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES,
A MASS MEDIA DECLARATION WE COULD NOT ACCEPT, AND
REINSERTION OF 3379 IN THE RACE DECLARATION.

6. WE RECALL THAT AT NAIROBI WE GOT THE THORNY PROBLEM
OF ISRAEL'S ASSIGNMENT TO THE EUROPEAN REGION SOLVED
BECAUSE THERE WAS A WELL-DISPOSED CONFERENCE
PRESIDENT WHO WAS WILLING TO UNDERTAKE SOME RATHER
IMAGINATIVE PARLIAMENTARY TACTICS ON OUR BEHALF. WE
MAY NEED THAT KIND OF "CREATIVE" APPROACH TO PROBLEM
SOLVING AT THE 20TH IF WE ARE TO WIN ON THE THREE
ABOVE-CITED CRITICAL ISSUES.

7. LE BLANC IS CERTAINLY A BETTER BET FOR SAFEGUARDING
U.S. INTERESTS THAT MAJALI. HE WOULD HAVE AT HIS
ELBOW VLADIMIR STEPANEK, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE
EXBD AND THE GC, WHO WOULD BE CARRYING OUT THE WISHES
OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL. ALL LE BLANC WOULD HAVE TO
DO WOULD BE WHAT STEPANEK TOLD HIM TO DO. WHATEVER
LE BLANC'S LIMITS, THERE IS NO QUESTION ABOUT
STEPANEK'S CAPABILITY. MAJALI, ON THE OTHER HAND,
WOULD BE UNDER STRONG ARAB PRESSURES TO FACILITATE
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ACTIONS PREJUDICIAL TO ISRAEL. SOVIETS AND EES, BY TRADING THEIR SUPPORT ON ISRAELI ISSUES, COULD MAXIMIZE ARAB SUPPORT FOR THEIR POSITION ON MASS MEDIA AND OTHER ISSUES ON WHICH SOVIETS AND THE U.S. HAVE OPPOSING VIEWS.

8. NOBODY IN GROUP ONE REALLY THINKS LE BLANC IS THE BEST CANDIDATE THAT THE GROUP COULD HAVE PUT FORWARD; NEVERTHELESS, IT IS HIGHLY IMPROBABLE THAT ANY OTHER GROUP ONE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE WILLING TO TRY AND OVERTURN THE DECISION THAT HAS BEEN MADE AND SUBSTITUTE THEIR CANDIDATE FOR HIM. IT IS EVEN LESS LIKELY THAT THE GROUP WOULD SUPPORT SUCH A MOVE. WHAT WE APPEAR TO BE FACED WITH IS A CHOICE BETWEEN LE BLANC AND MAJALI.

9. IN PERMDEL'S OPINION, THE U.S. SHOULD SUPPORT LE BLANC AS BEST HOPE OF GETTING FAVORABLE PARLIAMENTARY TREATMENT OF ISSUES OF CONCERN TO US AT 20TH GENCONF. FURTHERMORE, SUPPORT OF LE BLANC SERVES THE CAUSE OF SOLIDARITY WITH CANADA AND WITH THE MAJORITY OF THE MEMBERS OF ELECTORAL GROUP ONE. WE RECOMMEND THAT THIS DELEGATION BE INSTRUCTED TO REPLY TO JORDANIAN NOTE WITH OPERATIVE PARAGRAPH ALONG FOLLOWING LINES: "THE PERMANENT DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES WISHES TO INFORM THE PERMANENT DELEGATION OF JORDAN THAT IT WILL SUPPORT THE CANDIDATE OF ELECTORAL GROUP ONE, MR. NAPOLEON LE BLANC OF CANADA." WE WOULD THEN PROPOSE TO NOTIFY ALL PERMDELS OF OUR POSITION, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

10. THE SOONER WE MOVE ON THIS, THE BETTER ARE OUR CHANCES OF HEADING OFF THE JORDANIAN CANDIDACY.
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